

# Wings



Epworth Village  
a change for the better

Vol. 1 Issue 4

Summer 2010

York, Nebraska

## The 20% Solution

*You are the 20% solution. You are the "tipping point."  
Your portion . . . \$24 a month or just 76 cents a day.*



In the National Bestseller, the "Tipping Point" by Malcolm Gladwell he writes about "The Law of the Few" . . .

***"The success of any kind of social epidemic is heavily dependent on the involvement of people with a particular and rare set of social gifts."***

Gladwell says economists call this the, "80/20 Principle, which is the idea that in any situation roughly 80 percent of the 'work' will be done by 20 percent of the participants."

What does this mean in terms of Epworth Village?

Epworth Village, Inc. operates as a public/private partnership.

***This means we must raise 20% of our budget each year to fulfill our mission.***

Children are growing into adults by the minute.

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[www.epworthvillage.org](http://www.epworthvillage.org)

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## 20% Solution continued

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Epworth Village is one moment in their life's time span. We are the tipping point for more than 1,000 people each month. In some cases, these children and families are at a crossroads so severe that they are either heading to a healthy, productive future or to a lifetime of mental anguish or even prison.

The purpose of this newsletter is to share with you a social epidemic that you can help solve with information so compelling that you not only read about, but also act upon it.

Epworth can't help solve this social epidemic without those 20% private partnership funds. And we're not apologizing for this truth, because we know our work is the tipping point for precious lives.

So those are the facts about 20%. Bottom line, we need your help.

***Children are looking at you and asking will you be a part of the 20% solution? Read more and find out why you should.***

## HI, THIS IS MY LIFE SO FAR . . .

*We have to respect the children we serve at Epworth, but we also want to let you know about the real lives of these precious people so you can better understand what they are up against already at such a young age.*

*The scenarios below are pieces, snapshots of lives that caring people at Epworth have served. They are written as if the child was speaking to you. Out of respect for them, no names are shared or times of placement.*

The other day at school, I punched the director of the school. He didn't punch me back. He turned the other cheek. I have never been responded to like that. At home, I just get hit back. But not at the school, no, when he didn't punch me back, it made me break down and cry because I knew someone really cared. His response has changed me forever.

I have fetal alcohol syndrome. I was also sexually abused by my own father. I am angry and I have tried to hurt others and I hurt myself too.

I hoard food. I do this because my mom locked me in a room and didn't feed me. So I still do this. I have to learn that I can trust people to feed me. That's just one of the things I have to learn.

My parents love me a lot, but my dad is bi-polar and has never gotten treatment. I'm bi-polar too. Now we're all getting help at Epworth and we're learning that mental health issues are common and ~~we don't~~ we don't have to be embarrassed. They are treatable and our family has hope now.



I urinate in inappropriate situations to get attention. I was neglected most of my life. In fact, I don't even have any family members involved in my life anymore because of a lot of reasons. The staff members don't get



mad at me for my problems. They are starting to make me believe that I don't have to do bad things to get attention. Now I am getting attention for being good and they make me feel like I'm valued as a person. I've never felt that way in my entire life.

Hi, I'm from the city and I've never been out of the city. At Epworth we took a drive out into the country to see a farm. It may sound stupid, but it's true, I didn't even know what the animals I was looking at were. I didn't know the difference between a cow and pig and I'm 14 years old. But now I do. Maybe I'll live in the country someday.

Not too long ago, our cottage went fishing. I had never been fishing before. In fact, I've never even been on a boat or to a lake. It was the best day of my life when I caught my first fish. We threw him back, but it's okay, it was so fun and the trip made me feel like a kid for a day.

# Education interrupted

## Epworth Village Learning Center a confidence builder

By Marcia Schlegelmilch

For youth diagnosed with severe emotional and behavioral disorders education can be difficult. Any combination of these factors can cause an interruption in learning; triggering academic setbacks which must somehow be overcome. Enter Epworth Village Learning Center (EVLC). With a faculty and staff second to none, EVLC is a very special place dedicated to building kids' confidence in a real learning environment.

Education Director Scott Wiles has been with Epworth Village for what will be six years in August. "The longer I'm here the more apparent it becomes that many kids have been given up on by schools." He adds that parents and guardians often don't know where to turn or what to do. "There is a huge need for places like EVLC to help manage behaviors and get kids back in the school system."

According to Wiles, EVLC gives kids the opportunity to continue their education within their treatment. For many years, children in residential treatment lost out on the chance to keep learning while receiving help; as a result, kids fell further and further behind.

"When kids come to us for treatment (which can last from 6-9 months, and occasionally longer) they don't have to worry about credits; they can earn them right here."

Kids can earn credits as they work their treatment plans because EVLC is a K-12 Interim School under Rule 18 of the Nebraska Department of Education. Although not meant to be a permanent solution, Interim Schools perform an important function.

Using a familiar reference point the Education Director explains, "For many kids school is difficult. EVLC is an opportunity to give kids the tools they need to succeed back in their home schools."



Ideally, students departing EVLC should carry with them a tool box containing strategies for establishing and maintaining positive relationships with peers, a respect for authority, and the ability to manage themselves in a classroom.

"We want to give kids the confidence, plain and simple, that they 'Can do it' in school," Wiles says.

One important piece of the puzzle happens as soon as kids realize they are in a safe place where staff cares about them;



Epworth Village Learning Center Education Director Scott Wiles says, "We want to give kids confidence, plain and simple, that they 'Can do it' in school."

when they realize they can indeed succeed at being accepted by peers and handling school work. These are the confidence builders of which Wiles speaks.

"All of this is important and EVLC is set up to make this happen. We are a smaller school with eight-10 children in a class for the most part. With eight kids and two adults we are able to give the needed attention," the Education Director informs.

Another plus for kids coming into EVLC is the school's ability to start working from where kids are. Admittedly, mainstream schools target academics. While at EVLC the energy is concentrated on behaviors, because as Wiles explains, "kids can't be successful until they manage their behaviors."

Things like Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD) interrupt learning for many EVLC students. That's why identifying the

struggle, meeting students where they are, and backing away a bit from academics is part of the plan. Flexibility is also an important component of the EVLC program.

Transitioning kids back to their home school is the goal. A good collaborative relationship with York Public Schools (YPS) assists in this effort; allowing kids to be mainstreamed into classes as they work through their individual plans.

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***"The longer I'm here the more apparent it becomes that many kids have been given up on by schools." He adds that parents and guardians often don't know where to turn or what to do. "There is a huge need for places like EVLC to help manage behaviors and get kids back in the school system."***

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According to Wiles, the mainstreaming experience gives kids the chance to see, "I am at a regular school and I am successful ... I can be successful at a public school." EVLC also works with home school districts, sharing strategies from their tool box that work for each individual student.

Whatever brings kids to Epworth Village and EVLC the goal is one in the same, to teach and impact youth for the better; that is, to treat children and help them to be successful.

Nancy Elbracht teaches middle school English at EVLC, along with a fifth period class of Healthy Relationships and Creative Expression. She is one member of a faculty



CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

# Monetary Donations January 1 to May 31, 2010

## Churches, UMW Units and Church Groups

Adams UMW  
Albion UMC  
Albion UMW  
Arcadia UMW  
Archer Zion UMW  
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Sidney First UMW  
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Nebraska Legislative League  
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**20%**  
solution..



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or 76 cents a day!**

Contact Megan Linnell at (402) 362-3353 or [meganl@epworthvillag.org](mailto:meganl@epworthvillag.org) to find out more.

## SAVE THE DATE

At Epworth we get to the "Heart of the Matter"

## Heart of the Matter Fundraiser

Thursday, September 9, 2010 at 6:30 p.m.

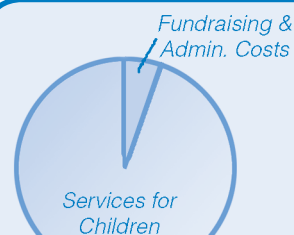
Stone Creek Event Center, McCool Junction, NE

**Reserve your table TODAY! They are going faaaaaaasst!**

Call Kerry Hoffschneider, Public Relations Director

(402) 362-3353 ext. 1144 or email [kerry@epworthvillage.org](mailto:kerry@epworthvillage.org)

Check out our 2009 Annual Report Online at: [www.epworthvillage.org](http://www.epworthvillage.org)



**In the last fiscal year we spent 90 percent of our budget on services for children.**

□ 90 Percent Services for Children

■ 10 Percent Fundraising and Administrative Costs



# Non-Monetary Donations January 1 through May 31, 2010

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 Anaheim UMC  
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 Aurora UMC  
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 O'Neill UMW  
 Omaha Faith-Westwood UMW  
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## One of Our Priceless People: Gocke retires from Epworth Village after 21 years

For more than two decades her broad smile with deep dimples, big heart and committed hands made their way to Epworth's school and into the hearts of those she met along the way. Judy Gocke remembers the school when it was in Mills basement on Epworth's main campus on North Division in York. She also remembers when the school moved to the now Epworth Village Learning Center that serves the hearts and minds of 80 boys bravely facing their behavioral health issues in the classrooms of the old Edison Elementary School. She saw Epworth expand to its current reach of more than 1,000 people a month. Now she is stepping into retirement, but not entirely away from the home away from home she says she has grown to love so much.

During Gocke's career, she has seen countless students who did not want to learn, find the desire. She has seen countless children deep-seeded with anger find hope in themselves. "I remember seeing a presentation and the analogy fits so well with the work we do at Epworth. It was a police officer from Lincoln who wadded up a piece of paper and tried to straighten it out. The children at Epworth have wrinkles in their lives and we are here to support them, to help them find a way to press those folds out and make better, more positive choices. The children and families we serve really are no different than any of us, they honestly aren't."

"I am a firm believer that we don't change our lives on what we know alone. We change our lives on what we feel. What these children feel is the real answer to helping them change their lives. That is the greatest joy found in this work, seeing



them find their own sense of joy," she said.

The positive "seeds" Gocke has planted in the lives of those around her throughout her more than two decades of care and compassion would be impossible to fit into the confines of an article. Among the great number that are noteworthy, are the hundreds if not thousands of "Green Books" that she and her sister, Linda Gierhan, put together for the boys at Epworth to

have signed with inspirational messages from staff members and peers once their treatment is complete.

"That's the hardest thing, not knowing where the kids will end up. I always write in each of their Green Books to please let us know where they are and how they are doing after they leave. Those contacts later on mean so very much."

"I have always appreciated Judy's passion for what we do at Epworth," said Scott Wiles, Education Director. "Judy is one of those people who won't allow the negative things going on around her affect her demeanor. She always greets you with a wonderful smile. Judy has worked very hard for a lot of years with the boys at Epworth and she has impacted many young men. I believe this all stems from her faith in Jesus Christ and her willingness to show the love of Christ to students and fellow employees alike."

"Epworth has been a blessing to me," Gocke said. "I feel like I have grown more than anything. I truly believe the Lord has always placed me where I was meant to serve."



# Education interrupted continued...

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

and staff totaling 27. Elbracht appreciates the fact that “her” EVLC students are everyone’s students at EVLC. She loves the flexibility of her classroom and the way all departments work together for kids.

According to Elbracht, viewing students as “ours” demonstrates the way Epworth Village sees the “bigger picture” as it uses a team approach in everything it does; whether cottage, school (EVLC) or therapy ... working together is key.

Math teacher Andy Jensen sows seeds of success every day from his classroom on the second floor of EVLC. “I’m a math teacher trying to teach kids how to be successful in the classroom. I keep doing the best I can,” Jensen states. “We are planting seeds, and the seeds are the same for each (child). What is different is when they will be ready to grow.”

It is a tough assignment, teaching children with such diverse life experiences and abilities. When he needs a boost Jensen turns to Romans 12:12-13 in “The Living Bible, Paraphrased” which reads, “Be glad for all God is planning for you. Be patient in trouble, and prayerful always. When God’s children are in need, you be the one to help them out.”

## “Epworth Village Day” Declared by Governor

When Nebraska Governor Dave Heineman stepped up to the podium in the Warner Legislative Chamber on “Proclamation Day” his audience included a nice mix of Epworth Village clients, staff and volunteers. Why the gathering? Well, ninth on the morning’s agenda was the presentation of a signed proclamation declaring Wednesday, March 17, 2010 “Epworth Village Day” in the state of Nebraska. Witnessing the historic event were; Megan Linnell, Pam Phillippe, Eilene Hansen, Abbi Kleinschmidt, Angie Walker, Dave Rea, Tammy and Ray Boston with daughter Sabrina, Marcia Schlegelmilch and clients Louis, Connor and Derek.

Linnell, who addressed those gathered in the large space just off the State Capitol Rotunda, thanked the Governor for recognizing Epworth Village, an agency which has been caring for Nebraska children and families for more than 120 years now.

Following the presentation, Epworth Village clients, staff and volunteers attended a reception, hosted by Sen. Greg Adams and his wife Julie in the legislator’s office located in the State Capitol building.



The passage serves to inspire, serves as a reminder and provides guidance. With that in mind, EVLC faculty and staff draw upon all available resources to help kids whose education has been interrupted find out what it feels like to succeed.

## Honors & Memorials

### In Memory of...

**Irene Hanson**  
Lloyd Wulf  
**Howard T. Robson**  
Mr. & Mrs. Tom Vanous  
**Margaret Stock**  
Hollis Miller  
Arrow Seed Co.  
Carloe Bagby  
Alan & Ardice Braun  
Burt & Shirley Carter  
Cedar Bell Farm  
Martha Countryman  
Mr. & Mrs. Everett Erickson  
Vicki Fields  
James & Debra Girardin  
Mr. & Mrs. James Girardin  
Richard W. Gray, Jr.  
Rodney & Sharon Heim  
Ioleen Hitz  
Kaste Seed  
Bruce Kennedy  
Linda Kuhl  
Mr. & Mrs. Howard Lefler  
Melvin Luetchens  
Mr. & Mrs. John Luethje  
Ruth McMaster  
Joseph & Suzanne Meibergen Trust  
Miller Seed & Supply  
Kurt & Mary Mueller  
NU-Dwarf Farms, Inc.  
Mr. & Mrs. Walter Oehlerking  
William & Suzanne Palmer  
Sue Prichard  
Conrad J. Reeson  
Pamela Reeson  
Jim & Margaret Rice  
Outdoor ‘Bob’ Robinson  
Joy & Verle Schroder  
Sharon Smith  
Stock Seed Farms  
Christine Traver  
Lyle Woerth M.D.  
**Ronald Wright**  
Eilene Hanson  
Ryan & Kerry Hoffschneider  
Marcia Schlegelmilch  
**Warren Eichman**  
Mrs. Gweneth M. Eickman  
**Virginia Elwonger**  
Jean Campbell  
**Evelyn Folts**  
Mr. & Mrs. James Jacobsen  
**Edna Jacobsen**  
Mr. & Mrs. James Jacobsen  
**Donald Kaelin**  
Sapp Brothers Truck Stop, York  
**Mary Layton**  
Mrs. Nadine Liljestrand  
**Dr. David H. Mickey**  
Mr. & Mrs. Merrill Cook  
**Ron Milner**  
Carman’s Appliance Inc.  
**Betty Sheridan**  
Abbi Kleinschmidt  
**Jeanne Marie Widegren**  
Mr. & Mrs. Gary Kubicek

**Robert Coleman**  
O’Dean Coleman  
**Dr. Vincente & LoRene ‘Mimi’ Colon**  
Dr. & Mrs. Merrill Cook  
**Viola M. Crawford**  
Mr. & Mrs. Donald Gerdes  
**Jackie Edwards**  
Mr. Eugene Edwards  
**Aaron Eilerts**  
Mr. & Mrs. Ray Boston  
**Larry Forbes**  
Marcia Forbes  
**Hilda Franzen**  
Kristi Scheele  
**Steve Gay**  
Chris Tonniges  
**Barbara Harrington Haws**  
Abbi Kleinschmidt  
**Helen Hirschfeld**  
Mr. & Mrs. Gilbert Naber  
**Bessie Johnson**  
Mr. & Mrs. Julian Canaday  
Mr. LaVerne Johnson  
**Howard Johnson**  
Hastings First UMC  
**Jack A. King**  
Mr. & Mrs. Donald Gerdes  
**Dorothy Larson**  
Mr. & Mrs. Clifford Huffman  
**Fern Nansil**  
Okay Ladies Aid  
**Gail Otten**  
Mr. & Mrs. Clifford E. Huffman  
**Betty Rood**  
Warren Rood  
**Eleanor Schuknecht**  
Jane Batterton  
Mr. & Mrs. Tom Vanous  
**Willie Scripture**  
Bernie Scripture; The Flower Box  
**Larry Sharp**  
Carol Buckles  
**Bonnie Waller**  
Mr. & Mrs. Gilbert Waller

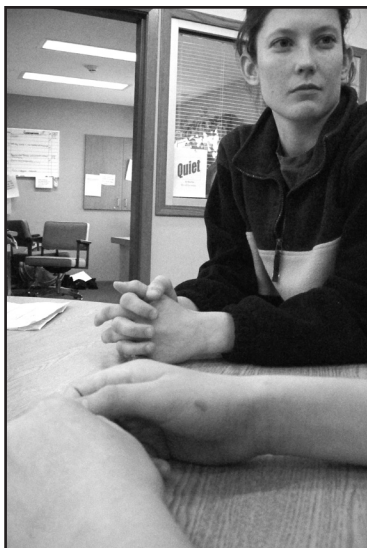
### In Honor of...

**Lynn Abney**  
Jerry & Ann Abney  
**Dr. & Mrs. Arthur Backus**  
Mr. & Mrs. Harold Backus  
**Jennifer Christensen**  
Kay Goehring  
**Zachary Christensen**  
Kay Goehring  
**Sherry Ebert**  
Corey & Traci Ebert  
**Jack & Marilyn Garner**  
Mr. & Mrs. Gilbert Naber  
**Abbi Kleinschmidt**  
Karen Harrington  
Kurt Kleinschmidt  
**Colton Kleinschmidt**  
Karen Harrington  
**Memphis Illif Chapel UMC**  
Nebraska Annual Conference UMC  
**Christopher & Lydia Phillippe**  
Pam Phillippe

## Family Matters

### Epworth Village therapy group builds support for children with no one

By Kerry Hoffschneider



Sarah Wald, a therapist at Epworth Village, is pictured with one of the children in her Family Matters group. Wald said the group is a place to encourage one another and share in successes. Before we meet each week, I ask myself, "How can I help them feel less alone today?"

They don't have any consistent family relationships in their lives. The impact of this reality on their human development is deep and complicated. At Epworth Village, children are finding support and hope despite family bonds that have been severed.

Each week at Epworth Village, Sarah Wald's "Family Matters" therapy group gathers together. They are mostly junior high age, but these group therapy sessions are not to talk about the normal pressures of teenage life. Rather, it's designed for those children who have very limited or no contact with members of their family of origin, in some cases they have literally

lost all ties with anyone outside Epworth who has a vested interest in who they become.

The outline Wald developed for the group that she spearheaded herself, covers areas that would normally seem obvious to those of us who have never been without the vital interpersonal relationships that develop in families. The topics addressed are first and foremost: What is a family? . . . Grief and Loss Issues, Maladaptive and Healthy Family Relationships, Expectations and Rights of Family Members as well as Trust in Self and Others. The group is a safe place to be with other young men who can validate each other and understand one another because they are peers who are experiencing the same thing.

Because Epworth prides itself on "family-centered" treatment, those children who have no "Identified Family Resource" are missing out on a core aspect of the program that is meant to connect children with their "home base" whatever form that takes. The family component provides the outside support and encouragement needed to make a

successful transition out of the Epworth program.

"It is hard to understand how this is possible," Wald said. "Typically children who have been abused or neglected have gone into foster care and later reunification with their families was successful. But there are times when that is not the case and when the foster home also decides that it's not the right place for the child."

"That means the boys in the Family Matters group have a unique set of struggles. Their only real support system is here at Epworth with no outside motivation by family. So clients in this situation can get 'stuck.' The children are deeply impacted and lose that connection with their family of origin, the bond they had becomes severed," she said.

"They are dealing with their own grief process and their negative beliefs about themselves. Often times they believe they are not loveable and blame themselves. They do not have that parental unit to reassure them, in many ways they are totally alone in the world," Wald said. "It is often heard, 'I do not have anyone to call mom.' That is the really sad part."

"But they are also very resilient too," Wald stressed. "The Family Matters group is a place to encourage one another and share in successes. Before we meet each week, I ask myself, 'How can I help them feel less alone today?'"

Wald is one of nine psychotherapists who team up with 200-plus employees who work with more than 1,000 people each month at Epworth. In 2008, a total of 9,235 Nebraska children were in out-of-home care at some point, according to the Voices for Children in Nebraska 2009 "Kids Count Report." The report also states that, "neglect is the most frequently recorded cause for removal of children from the home of their parents or guardians. Neglect has several forms that range from outright abandonment to inadequate parenting skills which affect child well-being. Parental drug abuse is the second most prevalent cause of placement followed by parental alcohol abuse and substandard or unsafe housing." Other issues listed in the report were the child's behaviors, child's illness, parental incarceration and parental illness/disability.

The Family Matters Group is a vital component to Epworth's continuum of care that includes residential treatment, family-centered therapeutic services, the Epworth Village Learning Center, In-Home Safety Services and Foster Care. Wald said it's important for the public to know these issues are very real, widespread and exist in all our communities. "We need more people to be aware and to be willing to help in any way they can. Being a Foster Parent for children with special needs is one very big way you can help. Essentially, these children need support and hope."

**Check out our website:  
[www.epworthvillage.org](http://www.epworthvillage.org)**

The site is filled with stories about clients and staff! It has volunteer opportunities and our needs list. It also has ways to donate online! It's another great way to stay connected with Epworth Village, Inc.!



## CURRENT NEEDS

### Ways to help...

We are in need of some items! **In fact, supplies are really low or completely out!** So if any of the "stuff" on the following list sounds like items you could round up, that would be SO very much appreciated. Contact Kerry Hoffschneider at (402) 362-3353 or email [kerry@epworthvillage.org](mailto:kerry@epworthvillage.org) to find out more!

Toilet paper  
Shampoo  
Napkins  
Paper towels  
Toothpaste  
Crayons  
Notebooks (no spiral)  
Twin-sized bed sheets  
(new or gently used)

Pillows (new)  
Bath size towels (new or gently used)  
Boys' and Men's Socks (new)  
Boys' and Men's boxers and underwear (new)



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2119 Division Ave., (402) 362-3353

## Campbell's Labels and Box Tops for Education

Thanks to all of you Campbells' Labels and Box Tops for Education continue to roll in. We are grateful to all of the individuals and groups who have taken this project to heart.

We thank the dedicated volunteers who continue to clip, cut and count all of the Labels and Box Tops we receive. This project is truly a group effort.

I just wanted you all to know you are doing a great job trimming and sorting the Labels and Box Tops before you send them. We really appreciate that; and so do our volunteers.

Speaking of volunteers, we have a new band of Box Top counters at York General Hearsthouse. This fun group has been meeting once a month and has counted more than 7,000 labels in the last three months; which means \$700 for the Epworth Village Learning Center.

Remember: Campbell's Labels have changed (the old ones are okay too), Box Tops are worth 10-cents each, and separating the two before mailing them in helps us out a lot.

Oh, and if you would like to give a program on the Labels and Box Tops effort for your UMW or club check out the DIY lessons on our website [www.epworthvillage.org](http://www.epworthvillage.org). Just click on the "Needs and Gifts" button to find the DIY link and choose the Campbell's "Do It Yourself" lesson.

Please give yourselves a big pat on the back from us for all of your hard work; God Bless and thank you so much for everything!

Call anytime with questions, Marcia Schlegelmilch  
(402)362-3353 ext. 1135, [mschlegel@epworthvillage.org](mailto:mschlegel@epworthvillage.org)



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